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Editorial

Robin Skeates

The General Editor

Durham University, UK

Welcome to the second edition of the *European Journal of Archaeology* for 2015.

Here, we present six general articles (one of which is accompanied by a set of comments) and ten book reviews. Below, I summarize and evaluate their significance to the archaeology of Europe.

Knut Andreas Bergsvik and Éva David investigate the production of bone and antler tools in Mesolithic western Norway, paying particular attention to fishhooks found at the rock-shelter of Sævarhelleren and at the cave of Vise. The *chaîne opératoire* for bone tools at both sites is found to be similar, shared by all makers, and comparable to stone tool production. On a broader scale, the authors challenge established views of the cultural connections of the hunter-fishers in western Norway, by arguing that this Mesolithic technology exhibits stronger connections to that of the north-east European (Baltic) tradition than to that of the Maglemose group in southern Scandinavia and northern Germany. Overall, this groundbreaking study provides us with an important foundation for pursuing the questions of how different technological traditions are

defined, how they are reproduced, how they interact over time, and how technological components are transmitted.

Also concerned with Mesolithic bone technology, Benjamin Elliott offers a critical review of Cristopher Tolan-Smith's long-standing typo-chronology of British Mesolithic antler 'mattocks'. Making use of radiocarbon determinations of bone and antler artefacts, he offers an alternative chronology, functional typology and terminology for red deer antler 'axes', red deer antler 'adzes' and elk antler 'mattocks'. This has implications for research around the North Sea basin on the maritime dispersal of antler 'T-axe' technology, which, although traditionally held up as a type-fossil of the Ertebølle culture, cannot now be regarded as derived from a single cultural group. Further microwear and radiocarbon analyses are now required to fill out the picture.

Katina Lillios considers the widespread shift from collective to individual burials in western Europe at the end of the Neolithic, with particular reference to the results of her recent excavations at the rock-cut tomb of Bolores in the Portuguese Estremadura. Questioning the grand narrative that mortuary practices are expressions of economic or socio-political systems, Lillios explores how the material practices of dealing with death (including laboriously creating and physically using collective burials) may have structured social, political and economic life and contributed to the social transformations of the early second millennium BC in western Europe. Comparable work on the micro-histories of a range of other mortuary sites is now desirable, to enhance the multi-scalar approach advocated in this article.

Francesco Iacono focusses attention on the Late Bronze Age settlement of Roca, situated on the Adriatic coast of south-east Italy, where excavations have uncovered two outstandingly rich deposits of Aegean-style finewares, local coarseware and sacrificed animal remains. Iacono interprets these contexts as the remains of large ritualized feasts that involved cross-cultural encounters between Aegean seafaring traders and local elites, and which contributed to increasing East-West Mediterranean social connections during the second half of the second millennium BC. In order to evaluate this hypothesis, we must now await full publication of these important archaeological contexts.

Zbigniew Sawicki, Aleksander Pluskowski, Alexander Brown, Monika Badura, Daniel Makowiecki, Lisa-Marie Shillito, Mirosława Zabilska-Kunek, and Krish Seetah consider how successive Pomeranian and Teutonic Order colonists provisioned and sustained themselves in the volatile borderland of the Lower Vistula valley, particularly at the recently excavated medieval settlement site of Biała Góra in north Poland. Fieldwork here, including coring for palynological analysis, was designed to elucidate the landscape context of this colony during the thirteenth century. The results provide a picture of significant deforestation and agricultural expansion related to the provisioning of the settlement, and the maintenance of pre-existing tracts of woodland, such as the Forest of Sztum, for occasional hunting. The evidence also suggests a level of stability in this landscape, despite the turbulent historical events that it witnessed. Overall, this article represents a good example of how a wide range of sources and themes can be drawn together to enhance our knowledge of the complex early history and archaeology of Prussia.

Suzie Thomas raises an interesting ethical dilemma for archaeologists: should they collaborate, condemn or ignore people with attitudes to the past that archaeologists widely regard as inappropriate? Reflecting on her personal experience as a consultant on the controversial (and ultimately abandoned) television programme entitled ‘Nazi War Diggers’, produced by ClearStory for the National Geographic Channel, Thomas concludes that, despite its inherent challenges, engagement remains the least problematic course of action. Given that the issues raised by Thomas bring us to a grey area not explicitly covered by archaeological codes of ethics, the *EJA* invited a range of scholars active in the field of public archaeology to respond to her article. Gabriel Moshenska calls upon archaeologists to unite in focussing our professional censure on pseudo-archaeologists and looters. Joe Flatman reminds us that heritage is actually rather unimportant to most people, and that heritage professionals must therefore develop interesting ways of connecting with individuals and communities. And Charlie Ewen concludes that archaeologists simply cannot afford to miss-out on opportunities to engage with large television audiences. In line with these comments, Thomas replies that archaeologists must raise public awareness of what they actually do and of the professional standards to which they work. But Cornelius Holtorf calls for a more sophisticated kind of analysis of the issues surrounding the social role of archaeology, and defends freedom of speech, favouring a more democratic and inclusive approach to knowing and valuing the past.

Estella Weiss-Krejci and Marta Díaz-Guardamino have gathered together another interesting set of reviews of recently published books of relevance to European archaeology. We begin with praise for two books about the human body: the first, a textbook that combines in the study of the body the analysis of both social identity

and forensic identification; the second, an ambitious attempt to characterise ‘body worlds’ in Europe between the Palaeolithic and the future. By chance, there follow reviews of a related pair of edited volumes: the first revisiting the archaeology of identity in prehistoric Europe, the second seeking to enhance the archaeological study of commingled and disarticulated human remains. We then move on to some mixed opinions for an edited set of papers that reflects on the materiality of early writing. Four reviews of prehistory books follow: one theorizing the ‘revolutionary’ invention of tool hafting, another offering an overview of current knowledge of the origins and spread of domestic animals in southwest Asia and Europe, another synthesizing the prehistory of Cyprus, and one more pulling together the archaeological evidence for the Early Neolithic in the Danube-Tisza interfluvium in Hungary. To wrap up, we have a strongly critical review of a new book on Old Norse cosmography, which the reviewer sternly describes as ‘perilously close to science fiction’.

If you are interested in submitting an article on any aspect of European archaeology, or have recently published a book that you would like us to review, do please get in touch with a member of our editorial team or visit us on <http://www.maney.co.uk/index.php/journals/eja/>.